

NAVAL SEAMAN

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NAVAL SEAMAN: A sailor in the non-commissioned ranks of the Royal Canadian Navy.

A naval seaman is more than a sailor. He is also skilled in a naval trade—a special field of work in which he is trained and in which he has the opportunity to advance in competence for promotion in rank. There are more than thirty naval trades. Their variety indicates the diversity of positions in which Canadian naval seamen are employed in the operation and maintenance of ships, naval aircraft, submarines, supply centres, dockyards, and training schools.

HISTORY AND IMPORTANCE

The origin of the naval seaman's occupation lies far back in history. At first, the seaman just sailed a ship-of-war; hand-to-hand fighting was done by others after ships had come alongside each other and grappled. When cannon came to be mounted afloat, the warship became a mobile gun battery with a range of destruction extended to that of the guns. Ships manoeuvred against each other in battle, under sail, seeking tactical advantage for the guns. The ship sailed and fought at the same time. The seaman became the prototype of the modern naval seaman, both sailing his ship and operating her weapons.

As warships evolved, there appeared new and varied duties which seamen were required to perform, most of them of a technical nature. In early times, seamen controlled their sailing vessel and its weapons by their own manual efforts and the power of the human eye. Today, in addition to these methods, naval seamen operate and maintain radio, radar, sonar, torpedoes, rapid-fire automatic guns, anti-submarine mortars, and complex electrical and electronic systems, each of which is an activity requiring specialization.

In the more than fifty-year history of the Royal Canadian Navy, naval seamen have rendered important service to Canada. During the First World War, the RCN participated in the North Atlantic convoy system and many Canadians served overseas with the Royal Navy. In the Second World War, Canada's Navy expanded more than thirtyfold, to 392 ships and 95,000 uniformed personnel, serving with distinction wherever the war at sea was fought. In the submarine-infested North Atlantic, escort was provided for the safe delivery to Britain of an estimated 181 million tons of supplies essential not only to the war effort but also to the sustenance of the population.

During the three years of hostilities in Korea (1950-53), eight RCN destroyers and more than 3,500 naval seamen and officers served with the United Nations fleet.

The present-day importance of the naval seaman is indicated by the purpose of the RCN. It is to ensure that Canada, in concert with allied and friendly nations, will have unrestricted use of the seas. For this purpose, and in support of Canada's defence policy, the RCN has a well-defined role:



to maintain sea communications and to defend Canada against attack from the sea; to contribute to the collective defence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization area and to contribute naval forces to the United Nations as may be required.

To perform its role, the RCN maintains a modern fleet trained to a high degree of operational readiness. More than forty ships include an aircraft carrier, destroyer escorts, frigates, a submarine and a mobile repair ship. The unprecedented threat of the modern submarine has led the RCN to continue to develop its specialty in anti-submarine operations.

Dependence on the sea is steadily increasing with growing demands for food and goods which, physically and economically, can be transported only by ships. The need for naval forces capable of ensuring the freedom of the seas is greater than ever before. The naval seaman has never had a more important role in the service of Canada and of the free world.

Numbering more than seventeen thousand, naval seamen comprise approximately eighty per cent of the uniformed personnel of the RCN. More than fifty per cent of them are in ships.

NATURE OF THE WORK

The nature of a naval seaman's work is closely related to the particular trade within which his responsibility and authority will increase with rank and technical qualifications. No matter what his naval trade may be, he must also have the basic skills of a seaman. These he acquires through formal instruction during basic training and in practical experience at sea.

A man is enrolled in the RCN with the rank of Ordinary Seaman without being classified into a naval trade. During his fifteen weeks of basic naval training, given immediately after enrolment, he is selected for his trade in the light of his aptitudes and capabilities as assessed by a battery of classification tests and by interviews. His own interests and the needs of the service are also considered.

At the trade classification centre, a naval seaman may be selected for one of the following twenty-four basic trades.

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| 1. Boatswain | 13. Weaponman air |
| 2. Weaponman surface | 14. Naval airman |
| 3. Firecontrolman | 15. Air fitter |
| 4. Weaponman underwater | 16. Air rigger |
| 5. Sonarman | 17. Administrative writer |
| 6. Radar plotter | 18. Pay writer |
| 7. Signalman | 19. Victualling storesman |
| 8. Radioman | 20. Naval storesman |
| 9. Radioman special | 21. Cook |
| 10. Engineering mechanic | 22. Steward |
| 11. Electrician's mate | 23. Medical assistant |
| 12. Hull mechanic | 24. Meteorologist's mate. |

Later in their naval careers, some seamen may be selected to enter one of the following eight trades after obtaining qualifications and experience in the related trades indicated in brackets:

1. Engineering technician (from engineering mechanic)
2. Electrical technician (from electrician's mate)
3. Hull technician (from hull mechanic)
4. Aviation technician (from air fitter or air rigger)
5. Ship's writer (from administrative writer or pay writer)
6. Ship's storesman (from victualling storesman or naval storesman)
7. Commissaryman (from cook or steward)
8. Meteorological technician (from meteorologist's mate)

There are seven other trades for which men may be selected after completing their first three-year engagement.

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Photographer | 4. Naval aircrewman |
| 2. Physical and recreational trainer | 5. Air electrical technician |
| 3. Clearance diver | 6. Air electronic technician |
| | 7. Electronic technician |

A naval seaman may be selected for training and service in submarines after qualifying in one of the twenty-four basic trades.

The trade structure of the RCN is designed to meet the needs of a modern and many-faceted navy. The well-trained seaman, working as a member of the naval team, contributes to the efficiency of his ship and the entire fleet.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The naval seaman's working conditions vary while serving afloat or ashore.

His ship may be based at Halifax, Nova Scotia, or at Esquimalt, British Columbia. It is from these ports that he will sail to take part in training cruises and operational exercises with other RCN ships and ships of allied navies. While at sea, the seaman lives close to the elements, taking the rough weather with the smooth.

Working spaces and accommodation on board ship are compact. Usually, naval seamen of the same rank are accommodated in the same space, called a "mess"; in destroyer escorts, sleeping quarters for the seamen are equipped with bunks, lockers, and drawer space. Meals are served cafeteria-style, and there are recreation areas for off-duty hours. There is a high standard of catering in RCN ships.

When his ship is in home port, the naval seaman is required to be on board during working hours and for specified periods of duty. If single, his home continues to be aboard ship. If married, he lives ashore with his family outside working hours.

Whether he is serving in a ship or in a shore establishment, the naval seaman has excellent opportunities to participate in team or individual sports, with equipment provided by the navy.

Shore establishments on the east and west coasts are concerned with the vital tasks of training men and providing material and technical support for the fleet. Men serving ashore may be employed in their trades in the fleet schools, naval dockyards, naval supply depots, naval air stations or other establishments.

QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY FOR ENTRY AND SUCCESS

To be eligible for enrolment in the Royal Canadian Navy, a man must be single, at least 17 but under 25 years of age, meet the physical and aptitude standards of the navy, and have Grade 8 education or better. He must also be a Canadian citizen or a British subject resident in Canada under the status of a landed immigrant. Young men of other nationalities may be selected under certain circumstances.

The Royal Canadian Navy has special training plans for young men who wish to serve as technicians or bandsmen.

The Technical Apprenticeship Training Plan trains men for service as engineering technicians or as hull technicians. An applicant must be single, at least 16 and under 19 years of age, have completed Grade 10, and meet the physical, aptitude and citizenship standards of the navy. The technical apprentice will undergo a 39-month technical apprenticeship course.

The Bandsman Apprentice Plan trains men for service as musicians in the four bands of the navy. The age and citizenship standards are the same as those required of technical apprentices. During the first two years of his apprenticeship training, the bandsman apprentice will be a student at the RCN School of Music, HMCS Naden, Esquimalt, B.C.

Under the two apprenticeship plans, young men are engaged for a seven-year period, whereas the normal first engagement period for a naval seaman is three years.

PREPARATION NEEDED

While Grade 8 is the minimum educational requirement for entry as an Ordinary Seaman, the more education a man has the better are his chances for success. Education not only increases a man's potential for training and advancement but also improves his chances of qualifying for promotion to commissioned rank.

Service in the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve, the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets, or experience in other cadet organizations, the Boy Scouts or Sea Scouts, is not necessary but may prove to be an advantage.

EMPLOYMENT, ADVANCEMENT, OUTLOOK

The initial period of engagement for naval seamen in the RCN is three years. This may be followed by two five-year re-engagement terms, one of seven years and a final five-year period to complete twenty-five years of service before retirement with a pension.

The newly-enrolled Ordinary Seaman goes to the RCN's New Entry training establishment, HMCS Cornwallis, in Nova Scotia, for a fifteen-week course. Here he learns naval customs and traditions, discipline, and seamanship, making the transition from civilian to service life under qualified instructors. During this period, the new-entry seaman is interviewed and given tests to determine his aptitudes, capabilities and interests in relation to naval trades. After being selected for a trade and completing the fifteen-weeks basic training, most Ordinary Seamen join their first sea-going naval ship for the remaining two and a half years of their first period of engagement.

In his ship, the Ordinary Seaman's time will be divided between a seaman's general duties and on-the-job training in his trade, supplemented by instruction and study.

The progress of the naval seaman's ability in his trade is measured in trade groups. The lowest is trade group 1 and the highest is trade group 4. The steps to trade group advancement are on-the-job training, practical experience afloat and ashore, and formal courses ashore. The attainment of trade group levels is necessary for promotion in rank. With rank go extra pay and responsibility for supervision of subordinate naval seamen.

Toward the end of his first year at sea and when he is fully qualified, the Ordinary Seaman is granted trade group 1 and he is promoted to the rank of Able Seaman.

On signing for a second term of service (five years), after his first three years are completed, the Able Seaman may go ashore to a Fleet School for a course in the theory and practice of his trade. He must pass this course to qualify for trade group 2. He may also, at this stage, write the examination for promotion to the next rank, Leading Seaman.

After completing the trade group 2 course in the Fleet School, most naval seamen will go back to sea, to put into practice their newly-acquired knowledge and to assume duties and responsibilities consistent with their rank and trade group. After satisfactorily completing a specified period as a Leading Seaman, the naval seaman may write the qualifying examination for promotion to the rank of Petty Officer Second Class.

By this stage, the naval seaman is well embarked on his naval career. From here, his career pattern will include duties at sea and ashore, and formal training ashore. As he adds to his knowledge and demonstrates his technical skill and ability to supervise subordinates, he may improve his trade group, rank, and pay. A man who attains the highest non-commissioned rank and trade group in the RCN is a Chief Petty Officer 1st Class, trade group 4A.

The young man who enters the Royal Canadian Navy as an Ordinary Seaman has an outstanding opportunity to develop and exercise his capabilities. He will learn a naval trade and can raise his educational standard. If he qualifies, the naval seaman can proceed to higher ranks with responsibility in his trade and for directing the activities of others with the knowledge that his occupation is of continuing importance.

Two opportunities exist for seamen to win promotion to commissioned rank. Outstanding seamen between the ages of 18 and 25 who lack educational credits for university entrance may be selected to attend RCN junior and senior matriculation courses of one year's duration each, followed by a fully sponsored university degree course. On successful completion of these courses, the seaman is commissioned in the rank of Sub-Lieutenant. The second avenue to commissioned rank may involve men over the age of 30 or with ten years of service in the Navy. Selected candidates proceed on a one-year RCN educational course and are then commissioned as specialists in their trades.

REMUNERATION

The pay of naval seamen compares favorably with salaries paid in civilian life when the extra benefits provided for seamen are taken into consideration. Free medical care, dental care, hospitalization, an optional contributory group surgical-medical insurance plan for dependents, and 30 days annual leave with pay, all must be taken into account.

In addition, seamen receive a clothing and kit upkeep allowance, a marriage allowance, and a subsistence allowance if serving where food and accommodation are not provided in a naval establishment.

The following are examples of naval seamen's basic monthly pay.

Ordinary Seaman (under 17)	\$ 60.00
Ordinary Seaman (over 17)	112.00
Ordinary Seaman (trained)	119.00
Able Seaman	138.00
Leading Seaman	195.00
Petty Officer 2nd Class	219.00
Petty Officer 1st Class	251.00
Chief Petty Officer 2nd Class	289.00
Chief Petty Officer 1st Class	324.00

Progressive increments are paid after the second, fourth, and sixth year of service in most ranks, as well as trades pay ranging from \$12 to \$90 per month.

Additional allowances such as aircrew allowance and submarine allowance are paid for special duties.

A pension plan, on a contributory basis, provides security for the career naval seaman on retirement. A retired naval seaman receives an annuity for life equal to 2% of annual pay and allowances averaged over any six consecutive years of service chosen by him, multiplied by the number of years' service (up to a maximum of 35). For example, a married Chief Petty Officer 1st Class with 25 years' service and with six years in his rank would receive an annual pension of over \$3,000.00.

ADVANTAGES

A career in the Royal Canadian Navy is more than just a job. The naval seaman has the opportunity to combine the exercise and development of his technical and leadership capabilities with the unique features of life in the naval tradition. The RCN is a modern service of men and ships devoted to the defence of Canada and the cause of peace. By virtue of his training and varied experience, the naval seaman becomes an adaptable, self-reliant, and skilled individual.

Exercises and cruises take Canadian naval ships to many foreign countries and ports where the naval seaman plays an important role as a representative of Canada. During such visits there are opportunities for meeting people of these lands and for broadening one's knowledge of the world in general.

Comradeship and adventure can be combined with normal home life, financial security, and a good pension at a relatively young age. Organized recreational and sports activities are encouraged.

In addition to advancement and promotion in a naval seaman's career, the RCN offers a young man opportunities for improving his formal education to the point where he may qualify academically for promotion to commissioned rank. While the Navy gives encouragement and assistance, such advancement depends largely on the initiative and effort of each individual.

DISADVANTAGES

The life of a naval seaman can be uncomfortable. He is sometimes required to work for prolonged periods in situations of stress and hazard, exposed to bad weather and in positions of responsibility for the safety of others at sea. Discipline is demanded of him.

Separation from his family during cruises of his ship may also be a hardship. He may be away from home for periods of a month or more, but these absences are interspersed with periods when his ship is in home port for maintenance and leave. Over all, the seaman's time away from his family is short in relation to his whole career time and in relation to many other occupations. With his family he may be transferred for employment in different parts of Canada. This could produce difficulties for the education of children.

When serving at sea, the naval seaman lives in close proximity to his shipmates and foregoes a certain degree of personal privacy.

The naval seaman's pay, depending upon his rank and family responsibilities, provides a comfortable and steady standard of living, but men of the same ability, in equivalent technical trades in industry, may make more take-home pay.

Merit is recognized through advancement in trade group and promotion in rank, with the consequent pay increases. However, there is no quick avenue to the senior ranks other than by qualifying for commissioned rank. Each non-commissioned rank, with its responsibilities, and privileges, must be held for a minimum length of time before the next can be attained.

HOW TO GET STARTED TOWARD THE OCCUPATION

The young man wishing to become a naval seaman should make sure that he will be able to meet the qualifications listed in the section of this monograph headed "Qualifications Necessary for Entry and Success."

WHERE TO APPLY. Young men who want to obtain more information or to make application for enrolment in the Royal Canadian Navy should visit, write, telephone, or wire the Naval Recruiting Office in one of the following cities:

Vancouver, B.C.	Fort William, Ont.	North Bay, Ont.
Victoria, B.C.	Windsor, Ont.	Montreal, P.Q.
Calgary, Alta.	London, Ont.	Quebec, P.Q.
Edmonton, Alta.	Hamilton, Ont.	Saint John, N.B.
Regina, Sask.	Toronto, Ont.	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Saskatoon, Sask.	Kingston, Ont.	Halifax, N.S.
Winnipeg, Man.	Ottawa, Ont.	St. John's, Nfld.

The address of each recruiting office is listed in the relevant telephone directory.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Many of the naval trades are closely related to occupation and trades in industry. Depending upon his naval trade, the naval seaman can gain both sound practical knowledge and experience which can be useful if he seeks employment at the end of his naval career.

Seaman and marine engineer and other occupations associated with the Merchant Marine, the RCMP Marine Service, the Canadian Coast Guard, and the Canadian Hydrographic Service may be considered as related to naval seaman in that they too have to do directly with ships and the sea. Certain aspects of the aviation industry are also related to naval trades.

FOR FURTHER READING

BOOKS: *The Far Distant Ships*—By Joseph Schull, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, Ontario.

PAMPHLETS: *Navy Careers and Education*—Available from the nearest RCN Recruiting Office or by writing to: The Naval Secretary, Naval Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario.

PERIODICALS: *The Crowsnest*—The Royal Canadian Navy's magazine. (Monthly). Queen's Printer, Ottawa, Ontario.

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